



**CITY OF CLEVELAND**

Mayor Justin M. Bibb

# **RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

*Revisions to Rules and Regulations incorporated 06/10/2025*

## Article I: Commission Purpose

The Articles presented here shall serve as the *Rules and Regulations of the Urban Forestry Commission* pursuant to C.O. 163.03(d). The Urban Forestry Commission of the City of Cleveland (the “City”) is governed by Chapter 163 “Urban Forestry Commission” of the Codified Ordinances of Cleveland, Ohio, effective June 13, 2022, a copy of which is attached to these *Rules and Regulations*. Pursuant to C.O. 163.01, the Urban Forestry Commission (the “Commission”) will serve in an advisory capacity to assist the Mayor, Cleveland City Council, Urban Forestry Section of the Division of Park Maintenance and Properties, and the City Planning Commission in ensuring the many benefits trees provide to citizens of the City by making recommendations related to:

- (a) Maintaining the health of trees in our parks, rights-of-way and other public spaces and reducing the risk associated with trees;
- (b) Increasing public education and support for urban forestry;
- (c) Providing for the planting of new and replacement trees to preserve and expand the tree canopy;
- (d) Maintaining the tree canopy and protecting trees during construction and development;
- (e) Establishing policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City; and
- (f) Generating funds from the foundation community, corporate community, the citizens of the City, the private sector, and government grants to support urban forestry.

## Article II: Members

1. In accordance with C.O. 163.02(a), the Commission shall be composed of fifteen (15) members, eight (8) of whom shall be appointed by the Mayor and the remaining seven (7) shall be appointed by Cleveland City Council (the “Council”). Terms for these appointments are governed by C.O. 163.02(d). The makeup of the members shall follow the requirements found at C.O. 163.02(b)(1) through (12).
2. Vacancies/Succession of Commission Members:
  - a. When a Commission member’s term is ending, they will go through an offboarding process. The Executive Committee will complete an exit interview with the leaving member. The Executive Committee will inform the Urban Forestry Commission and appointing entity (Mayor or Council) that the Commission position is vacant.
  - b. The Executive Committee, at their discretion, can recommend re-appointment to a second term.
3. Selection Process: If a Commission seat becomes vacant, the Urban Forestry Commission will complete a process to fill the seat.
  - a. The Executive Committee will announce the vacancy to the Urban Forestry Commission and appointing body (Mayor or Council).

- b. The Mayor's Office of Sustainability will post the vacancy on <https://www.sustainablecleveland.org/>.
- c. The Executive Committee may form an ad-hoc committee to support the advertisement and selection of new Urban Forestry Commission members to fill vacancies.
- d. There will be an application period of 30 days.
- e. The Executive Committee will review applications and complete interviews with qualified applicants. After interviews are complete the Executive Committee will communicate with the rest of the Urban Forestry Commission the top applicants for the Urban Forestry Commission to weigh in on the final recommendation.
- f. The Executive Committee will put forth the recommendation to City Council or the Mayor to fill the vacancy.

### Article III: Officers

The officers of the Commission shall be a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary. All officers are chosen from the Commission membership.

- 1. Chairperson: The Chairperson, selected by the Commission members at the first meeting of the Commission, shall appoint a Vice Chairperson and a Secretary, also at the first meeting of the Commission. They shall perform all duties incident to their office and shall be an *ex-officio* member of all committees.
- 2. Vice Chairperson: The Vice Chairperson, appointed by the Chairperson, shall act as Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson. In the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, the members of the Commission shall elect a Chairperson Pro Tem by majority vote.
- 3. Secretary: The Secretary, appointed by the Chairperson, shall conduct the official correspondence, keep meeting minutes and maintain an accurate record of the proceedings of the Commission and of all its Committees. The Secretary shall keep meeting minutes on file in the Division of Park Maintenance and Properties.

### Article IV: Committees

The Commission may create any committee or subcommittee it deems necessary to carry out the work of the Commission. Committees or subcommittees must create a committee charter to align with the goals of the Urban Forestry Commission.

#### 1. Commission Member Participation

Recognizing that the work of the Commission takes place within its Committees, all Commission members shall actively participate in at least one (1) of the established Committees.

#### 2. Members of the Public

In accordance with public meeting notification and sunshine laws, any member of the public may observe Committee meetings; however, public comment will not be accepted during Committee meetings.

3. Committee Participation (Non Voting)

At the discretion of the Committee Chair, ad-hoc (non-voting) participants and/or subject matter experts may be invited to participate in, comment on or provide content presentations during Committee meetings.

4. Additional Committee Members (Voting)

- a. From time to time, Committee Chairs may determine that additional voting members who are not duly appointed members of the Commission would be beneficial to advance the work and mission of the Committee.

Additional voting Committee Members shall:

- i. Provide a perspective or subject matter expertise not already present among Committee members.
- ii. Be recommended for Committee appointment by the Committee Chair and voted on by Committee members, with notification provided to the Executive Committee of such appointment.
- iii. Carry out a term of no longer than one (1) year, with re-appointment recommended by Committee chairs

## Article V: Meetings

1. Regular Meetings: The Commission shall meet at least quarterly. The regular quarterly meetings of the Commission are held on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Tuesday of the first month of the new quarter in Cleveland City Hall. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.
2. Public Meetings: All regular meetings of the Commission shall be public meetings and minutes shall be kept in a manner that make them available to the public. All meetings will be recorded with a link to the recording posted on the Mayor's Office of Sustainability website ([sustainablecleveland.org](http://sustainablecleveland.org)) until such time a Commission website is created.

3. Public Notice: Meeting notices and agendas will be published to the Mayor's Office of Sustainability website until such time a Commission website is created. The information shall be published at least one week in advance of the meeting.
  - a. Committee meeting notices will follow this same format. Committee chairs will provide an agenda and meeting location, time, and virtual link to the Executive Committee 10 days in advance of the meeting. The Mayor's Office of Sustainability will post this notice 7 days in advance of the meeting. The meeting cannot take place if these requirements are not met.
  - b. Committee chairs must establish a meeting cadence. Committees will meet at a minimum of 6 times per year.
  - c. Documentation of the following information is required and will be available to the public through the Urban Forestry Commission webpage after Committee meetings.
    - Charters will be published once formally adopted.
    - Meetings must be virtually recorded and minutes taken by the designated notetaker in accordance with the Robert's Rules of Order format form for meeting minutes. Meeting recordings will be available 1 week after Committee meetings. Meeting minutes will be available 1 week after the Committee meeting where they are approved.
4. Special Meetings: Special meetings of the Commission may be called by the Chairperson at the Chairperson's discretion.
5. Quorum: Pursuant to C.O. 163.03(b), a simple majority of the Commission members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. No vote shall be valid unless a quorum is present at the time of the vote. No member shall be entitled to vote unless they are physically present at the meeting at the time of the vote.
6. Meeting Attendance: Any Commission member who is absent from three (3) consecutive duly-called meetings shall be removed from the Commission unless said member files a written appeal with the Commission and a majority thereof votes to retain said member.
7. Agenda: An agenda of items to discuss at the Regular or Special Meeting shall be prepared and distributed to the Commission members at least five (5) calendar days prior to the meeting. The agenda shall be made public prior to the meeting. No other items shall be voted upon at the Commission meeting unless, by unanimous vote, the Commission decides to consider other matters.
8. Public Participation:
  - a. In-Person Public Comment: The last agenda item for each Regular

Meeting will be a placeholder to allow for public comment. Any member of the public who wishes to address the Commission during the allotted time may do so within the following parameters:

- Sign in for public comment at least five minutes prior to the meeting
  - Comment must be relevant to the agenda
  - Each person has a three minute time period to comment
  - The Chairperson continues to have discretion to allow comment
- b. Online Public Comment: The Executive Committee reviews each public comment before the quarterly public meetings to determine if the public comment requires a response from the Urban Forestry Commission.
- If the public comment is within the scope of the Urban Forestry Commission and does require a response, the Executive Committee will delegate the task to the appropriate committee. The Urban Forestry Commission will issue a response, at their discretion, by the next quarterly meeting.
  - If the public comment is not within the scope of the Urban Forestry Commission and does not require a response, the comment is recorded. The Executive Committee may provide the contact of a more appropriate party to respond to the commenter if necessary.
  - In-person and online public comments will be recorded in Google Forms. If they have been responded to by the Urban Forestry Commission and the response date will be noted in the form.

#### Article VI: Duties

1. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to assist the Mayor, Cleveland City Council, Urban Forestry Section and the City Planning Commission in ensuring the many benefits trees provide to citizens of the City.
2. The Commission shall have such expressed duties as set forth in C.O. 163.04(a) through (j). Current duties of the Commission are as follows:
  - a) Assist with the adoption of an urban forest management plan and assist with updating a comprehensive inventory of trees and tree benefits analysis at regular intervals for the City;
  - b) Provide recommendations on policy, plans, programs, or legislation concerning urban forestry management, sustainability and protection of associated trees on public or private property;
  - c) Review and comment on any program or work undertaken by any City Department, technical or advisory bodies related to the protection or enhancement of the urban forest when so requested by the Mayor or Council;
  - d) Work with the necessary departments to implement recommendations to reduce tree loss and damage;
  - e) Monitor implementation of City plans and policies related to the urban forest and provide review and comment to the Mayor and Council;

- f) Assist the Director of Parks and Recreation, or their designee, in preparing educational programming for residents, businesses, and organizations in the community to encourage proper maintenance of trees within the City;
- g) Solicit grants or contributions to the Tree Preservation Fund set forth in C.O. 509.21, for the purpose of supporting the preservation, protection, maintenance, purchase and planting and establishment of trees in the City, and educating the public with respect thereto;
- h) Review and report on whether the penalties collected for unauthorized damage or removal of trees are being paid to the Tree Preservation Fund as set forth in C.O. 509.99 and make recommendations regarding the disbursement of funds from the Tree Preservation Fund;
- i) Assist the Director of Parks and Recreation, or their designee, in preparing an annual report to Council, the Mayor, and the public regarding the activities of the Commission; and
- j) Any other duty requested by the Mayor or Council.